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To the Editors of *Mod. Lang. Notes*.

SIRS:—In the January number of the *Notes*, page 27, Professor Geddes refers to "Professor Hempl's series of *Ideophonic Texts*." This implies an error. The series referred to is that of Mr. Robert Morris Pierce. The pedagogical ideas upon which the series is based are his, not mine, though I am in part responsible for the execution of the Tell volume. My position as to the teaching of foreign languages may be seen in the Introduction to *The Easiest German Reading* (Ginn and Co.) and in my forthcoming *German Grammar*. In the latter book I have also presented the modification that I advocate of the alphabet of the International Phonetic Association.

GEORGE HEMPL.

*University of Michigan.*

#### BRIEF MENTION.

*A Student's History of English Literature.* By WILLIAM EDWARD SIMONDS, Ph. D. Boston, Houghton, Mifflin & Co.

It is probably impossible to produce a perfectly satisfactory manual of English Literature. The compiler of such a work—unless he aims at nothing higher than a mere cram-book of names and dates—has four elements to deal with: the character and tendencies of the time; accounts of individual authors and works; critical estimates; and illustrative excerpts. It is not possible to treat all these adequately in the limits of a text-book; so every compiler must frame an equation for himself, and determine, according to his tastes and judgment, what he will insert and what omit.

Dr. Simonds has adjusted this equation in a fairly satisfactory manner: the characteristics of the times and leading lines of drift in thought and action are noted, and the critical remarks are clear and just. If some of the biographical sketches seem meagre, and illustrative extracts too few, we must bear in mind the necessary limitations of a manual of this kind. The "suggestions for study" are excellent.

A few minor inaccuracies may be passed over as

unimportant; but the student should not be told that Burke "was raised to the peerage as Earl of Beaconsfield."

A few years ago (Dec., 1897) the Northwestern University acquired a valuable collection of German classics, gathered by the late Geheimrat Schneider, a member of the local government in Schleswig. Professor James T. Hatfield, to whose initiative and zeal the acquisition of this treasure for the Library of the Northwestern University is principally due, has just published in *The Book-Lover*, Vol. III, No. 6 (January-February, 1903), pp. 485-490, an interesting article, giving a brief account of the collection and illustrating by a few typical examples its usefulness for the study of German literature. The library contains some two thousand seven hundred volumes and consists almost entirely of original editions of German authors, from the time of the Reformation down to the latter half of the nineteenth century. The classics of the eighteenth century are especially well represented, and in Professor Hatfield's article a prominent place is naturally given to the works of Goethe, Schiller, and Lessing. We learn that not only such rare books as the first editions of Goethe's *Werther*, *Iphigenie*, and *Hermann und Dorothea*, or Schiller's *Anthologie* and *Die Räuber* are included in the collection, but also important periodicals like the *Thalia* and *Die Horen*. The library, moreover, contains one of the most complete collections of "poetical almanacs" (*Musenalmanache*); for example, complete sets of the Göttingen, Leipzig, and Berlin series.

#### PERSONAL.

Professor F. J. A. Davidson, who was Assistant Professor of Romance Languages at Leland Stanford University from 1895 to 1900, and in 1900-1901 Professor of Romance Languages at the University of Cincinnati, is now special lecturer on Spanish at the University of Toronto. His resignation of the chair of Romance Languages at Cincinnati was occasioned by the death of his father, the administration of whose estate necessitates Dr. Davidson's residence in Toronto.